

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

The claims have been revised responsive to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, except as set forth below. Additionally, Claims 1 and 3 have been canceled, and Claims 2 and 10 have been amended to recite that the position switcher is “provided outside of the processing chamber.” Basis for this is evident from the figures. Claims 2 and 10 have also been amended to recite that the carrier for relatively moving the temporary holding member is itself “relatively movable.” Again, basis for this is evident from the original disclosure.

Concerning section 1.1 of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, the objection to Claims 2 and 10 is not understood. Since Claim 10 does not depend from Claim 2, there is no reason why the reference to “a carrier” would create a double inclusion or confusion.

With respect to section 1.2 of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Claims 4-9 have been amended to depend from Claim 2. With respect to section 1.5 of the rejection, Claim 10 recites that the temporary holding member is switchable whereas Claim 12 recites that the temporary holding member is mounted to be “switchingly movable.” Thus the claims recite different features and Claim 12 does not involve a double recitation.

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,100,502 (Murdoch et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 2 and 10 recite in part that the temporary holding member is switchable between a temporary holding position and a retracted position of resting “outside of the processing vessel.” An example of this is shown in Fig. 7 wherein the temporary holding members 15 are located outside of the pressure chamber 18. This provides the advantage that the processing chamber need not be sufficiently large sized to accommodate the temporary holding member, and the temporary holding member will not influence the processing being performed within the chamber.

On the other hand, it is evident from Murdoch et al. that the “temporary holding members” 32 therein are at all times located *within* the processing chamber 18. For this reason alone, the claims define over Murdoch et al.

In any case, Claims 2 and 10 have been further amended to recite that the position switcher is also provided “outside of the processing chamber.” For example, in the illustrated embodiment the rotatable shafts 14 and driving mechanism 24 are provided outside of the chamber 18. On the other hand, the springs 34 and wafer retractor 14 of Murdoch et al. are provided within the processing chamber 18. For this reason as well, the claims clearly define over this reference.

Concerning the rejection of Claims 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Murdoch in view of U.S. patent 5,979,306 (Fujikawa), it is noted that Fujikawa was cited to teach the feature of the dependent claims that the processing chamber has two vessel members which may be separated and united. However, since Fujikawa provides no teaching of a temporary holding member having a retracted position outside of a processing vessel, and a position switcher provided outside of a processing vessel, Fujikawa would provide no teaching for overcoming the shortcomings of Murdoch et al with respect to Claims 2 and 10, and so the claims define over any combination of the above references.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early notice of allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon



Robert T. Pous
Registration No. 29,099

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)